

ED 030 042

AC 004 541

College Without Classes: Credit Through Examinations in University Adult Education.

Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults, Brookline, Mass.

Pub Date 61

Note-46p.

EDRS Price MF-\$0.25 HC-\$2.40

Descriptors-Acceleration, Administrative Policy, *Adult Students, *College Credits, *Equivalency Tests, General Education, *Higher Education, Program Proposals, Questionnaires, *Student Placement, Surveys, Technical Education, University Extension

Identifiers-Brooklyn College, Northeastern University

This survey of member institutions of the Association of University Evening Colleges and the National University Extension Association sought to determine the prevalence of giving credit or advanced standing by examination, what instruments are used for such purposes, any tendency to favor the application of credit or advanced standing to either technical or general (liberal arts) education, tendencies for or against applying testing devices in the adult education program, and current faculty or administrative attitudes toward credit without classes. Special programs and arrangements at Northeastern University, Brooklyn College, and elsewhere were examined, along with a program proposal by Hacker of Columbia University, and such issues as the transferability of credits, suitable evaluation, instruments, course content, and residence requirements. Findings indicate that the problem of advanced status is a source of concern and confusion for many administrators and faculty in higher education, and that steadily increasing college and university enrollments create a favorable climate for trying to accelerate the programs of qualified students. (Five tables, footnotes, and the questionnaire are included). (author/ly)

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COLLEGE WITHOUT CLASSES:

**Credit through Examinations in
University Adult Education**

CENTER for the STUDY OF LIBERAL EDUCATION FOR ADULTS

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THE CENTER *for the* STUDY OF LIBERAL EDUCATION FOR ADULTS

was established as the result of a grant from the Fund for Adult Education to work with the universities providing liberal education for adults. The official purpose of the Center is to "provide aid and leadership to the forces that can develop the evening college and extension movement into a more effective instrument for the liberal education of adults." Communications may be addressed to the Director, 4819 Greenwood Avenue, Chicago 15, Illinois.

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PRINTED IN U.S.A.

FOREWORD

Many adults are attending our colleges and universities to earn baccalaureate degrees. They tend to be persons whose education has been interrupted for one reason or another and who return to school usually on a part-time basis. The Center is interested in issues concerning appropriate degree programs for these students, and believes that such programs pose special problems because they do not follow the normal pattern of four years of full-time study immediately following high school.

Two kinds of questions may be asked. Is the regular degree, designed primarily for younger students, a proper one for adults? Assuming for the moment that it is, are the same methods for acquiring credit proper or necessary? It is our opinion that, especially with adults, experience or other independent learning may be equivalent to hours spent in the classroom and may serve to fulfill part, if indeed not all, of the requirement for the baccalaureate degree.

At Brooklyn College an experiment, sponsored by the Center, has produced a system for awarding credit toward a degree. In connection with the project and our search for other ways to push ahead in this direction, we discovered that little was known about attitudes and practices in regard to awarding advanced standing or advanced placement—and especially the extent to which the practices applied to adult students. We decided this was a prior question worth investigating, and Maurice d'Arlan Needham, a member of the Center staff, was assigned to make the study.

Since the project was initiated, we have uncovered interest in a number of places. Many of our colleagues in university adult education are anxious to learn more about national practices in this area. There is an increasing amount of interest in special degree programs for adults, involving the content of adult education for credit, as well as the possibility of credit by examination. More recently there appears to be a growing discussion of more flexible and appropriate ways to provide regular de-

grees for qualified adults. One foundation has gone so far as to consider the possibility of experimenting with a degree by examination along the lines of the University of London.

College without Classes is based on an extensive report prepared by Mr. Needham. The data was gathered about two years ago, but we believe it may be more timely now than it was then. At this point, however, we believe a brief monograph will serve a more useful purpose than would a longer volume. Mr. Needham is no longer with the staff, and the revisions are not his. We have tried to be faithful to the findings and analysis in his original report. Responsibility for the final form of the monograph rests with the present staff of the Center, but full credit for the work which went into the study remains with Maurice Needham.

A. A. Liveright

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I

PURPOSE AND APPROACH OF THE STUDY

Should institutions of higher education give college credit without classes? Since World War II this question has been asked with increasing frequency. The potential growth of college enrollments and the demands for higher education serving both average and exceptional students make it a serious concern. If knowledge or skills are not acquired in the classroom, then where? The obvious answer, of course, is that they may come from individual study or experiences—and this makes the subject one of special interest for deans of university evening colleges or extension divisions where mature students have a great deal of experience, a possible storehouse of knowledge which might count toward a college degree.

College credit without classes for adult students has been the subject of considerable discussion among adult educators and the basis for one extensive experiment. The experiment was undertaken by Brooklyn College, where a system has been devised for granting credit toward the baccalaureate degree and for filling some of the gaps between experientially acquired knowledge and the degree requirements.¹ At the same time, others have been proposing plans for degrees or credits by examination, arguing that for many reasons these would be especially appropriate for adults.

If credit is to be granted, how and under what circumstances? In searching for answers to these questions, it became apparent that there was much vagueness regarding national practices and attitudes currently in vogue. This was particularly the case in the area of university adult education. Therefore, the Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults enlisted the cooperation of the member institutions of the Association of University Evening Colleges and the National University Extension

1. See Bernard H. Stern and Ellswerth Missal, Adult Experience and College Degrees (Cleveland, Ohio: The Press of Western Reserve University, 1960).

sion Association for a preliminary survey. Membership in these two associations includes 170 colleges and universities, both public and private. The roster contains a large proportion of the nation's major institutions of higher education and most of the colleges and universities with regularly established divisions of adult education.

This is a report of the survey. It was an attempt to find answers to the following questions: (1) How extensive is the practice of giving credit or advanced standing by examination? (2) What instruments are used for such purposes? (3) Where the practice is established, is there any tendency to favor its application to either technical or general (liberal arts) subject matter? (4) Is there any tendency either for or against the application of testing devices in the adult education program? (5) What is the current faculty or administrative attitude toward credit without classes?²

To facilitate reporting, it is necessary to have common understanding of a number of terms. Definitions used in the questionnaire and in the report are listed below.

Advanced placement—means that students may be exempted from taking certain courses for which they have demonstrated proficiency. They will be put into an advanced course in the same subject.

Advanced standing—means that students are not only exempted from taking certain courses, but will be given credit for the courses by means of examinations or other testing procedures.

The major difference between these two terms and categories is that advanced placement does not in itself involve granting credit; advanced standing procedure does.

Liberal education—as used here refers largely to courses derived from the disciplines of the arts and sciences; this means the biological sciences, the social sciences, the physical sciences, and the humanities.

Technical education—includes business and commerce courses and other work outside the "liberal arts" tradition.

Five major types of tests used at present to determine qualifications for advanced placement, advanced standing, or both include:

2. See Appendix for a copy of the questionnaire used.

Oral tests and interviews—largely devised and given on an individual institution basis. They have been developed mainly for diagnostic purposes in connection with advanced placement and advanced standing procedures. They involve, to a considerable extent, counseling in connection with curricular requirements.

Advanced Placement Program tests—developed by the College Entrance Examination Board and now handled by the Educational Testing Service, which enable several hundred American colleges and universities to grant advanced placement and/or advanced standing to entering freshmen.

Sequential Tests of Educational Progress—developed by the Educational Testing Service to measure ability to use knowledge in a number of fields.

General Education Development tests—developed under the auspices of the United States Armed Forces Institute and used to place returning veterans and other adults at the proper level in educational institutions, and to determine the amount of academic credit that should be granted for educational experiences and achievement.

Graduate Record Examination area tests—also developed by the Educational Testing Service and used to permit evaluation of achievement and of capabilities in connection with general education goals.

Development of Measurement Devices

The problem of evaluation of student achievement was recognized early as paramount in any academic project involving independent study. Experience after World War II with such achievement batteries as the tests of general educational development (GED), covering major areas of the usual high school curriculum and designed to serve as an equivalency examination over such a curriculum for a service veteran who had not completed high school, helped to concentrate speculation and thinking on an approach of this kind in testing college applicants and students. Long experience with the College Entrance Examination Board achievement tests (CEEBS) in various subjects had given one usable approach. Postwar developments of the Graduate Record Examination tests of general education (GR-GE) seemed to reflect the newer orientation of the GED tests. Their much wider scope and use in evaluating general educational development and level reflected concern with larger enroll-

ments, of course, but also, perhaps, with the considerably more mixed backgrounds of students. Finally, insofar as evolution of postwar evaluation devices is concerned, there are the examinations in twelve subjects under the Advanced Placement Program (APP) that provide the basis for a number of colleges and universities to permit either advanced placement and/or advanced standing with credit for work actually done in secondary school before entering college. Some 560 American high schools in more than 420 cities offered advanced, college-level courses by 1958. Under the APP, the rating on the standardized final examinations, in any or all of twelve subjects, plus teachers' recommendations, permit the participating colleges to determine:

1. Where the student should be placed (e.g., in an advanced section or year of the subject).
2. Whether or not he should receive credit for the course (i.e., advanced standing), or if he should gain only the reward of this higher-level work.

II

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

There were 131 returns from the 170 institutions within the AUEC-NUEA membership for which responses are considered adequate to provide data for the present survey and study.¹ The number of adequate responses represents 77 per cent of the total number of institutions queried.

Acceptance of Advanced Placement

Of the 131 colleges and universities returning sufficient data for the purposes of this survey, 104 institutions have some system of permitting advanced placement of students in some division, school, or college of the institution. This means only a few courses in a number of cases. One university accepts proficiency in typing and in engineering drawing as evidence that the student should be moved on to advanced courses in these subjects. Another university permits advanced placement for students who can offer proof of proficiency in shorthand and typing. One liberal arts college reports it will "consider in any area" requests for advanced placement; and a major private university—significantly without competition in its region for its high standards of scholarship and its prestige reflected on students and graduates—permits a student to qualify for advanced placement in "all" courses offered in either the technical or liberal courses of its schools.

Thus, it appears that in a few schools all liberal courses and any technical course employ advanced placement: That is, a student will be permitted to try to show his qualifications for being exempted from a particular course required in his curriculum and for being allowed to substitute another and more advanced course for the elementary or earlier one.

It appears from the survey that in most schools, students may attempt to prove their qualifications in many liberal courses and in at least a few

1. AUEC and NUEA, which will be used throughout this study, refer to the Association of University Evening Colleges and the National University Extension Association respectively.

technical ones. Only 21 per cent of the sample do not provide for advanced placement procedures, as contrasted with the 79 per cent that do. In numbers, advanced placement is provided for and permitted by 104 of the 131 institutions returning the questionnaire with adequate data. The policy and practice are rejected by 27 institutions out of the 131.

Provision for Advanced Standing

Of the 131 institutions that have reported their data, only 75 colleges and universities accept the policy and provide for the practice of advanced standing in any division, school, or college of the institution queried as contrasted with the 104 colleges and universities that accept advanced placement procedures. The number of colleges permitting advanced standing represents 72 per cent of those permitting advanced placement.

Advanced standing is not permitted by 43 per cent of the institutions reporting in the sample; in contrast to the considerably smaller 21 per cent of the schools not permitting advanced placement.

Policies and practices in advanced standing as well as in advanced placement vary widely with different colleges and universities. For example, one college permits students to attempt to qualify for advanced placement in any course, while this same college rejects any procedures to permit students to try to attain advanced standing in these courses. On the other hand, one institution which permits advanced placement only in connection with shorthand and typing, accepts attempts by students to achieve advance standing in any "technical" course and in "many" liberal courses. A few universities permit advanced standing in relation to any course, just as they do for students desiring to achieve advanced placement. Yet the university that was mentioned earlier as permitting advanced placement in the case only of typing and engineering drawing, rejects any advanced standing attempt.

Thus, in a few schools all liberal courses and most or all technical courses may be qualified for in procedures providing for advanced standing. In most schools, students may qualify in many liberal courses and in at least a few technical courses.

Practices of Association Members

From the data obtained there appear to be a number of member institutions that are willing to consider students with unusual and non-traditional

backgrounds and educational experiences as candidates for degrees. The AUEC-NUEA survey indicated that 88 per cent permit either advanced placement or advanced standing, or both.

It is significant that the majority practice appears to be on the side of liberalization of policies that limit either advanced placement or advanced standing among the AUEC-NUEA institutions. It appears, however, that NUEA membership reporting in the sample is considerably less liberal, and perhaps more timid, than the AUEC membership.

For instance, the 34 institutions that have membership only in NUEA include 19 per cent of the colleges and universities that accept advanced placement and 16 per cent of the schools permitting advanced standing procedures. By contrast, 60 of the 75 AUEC members report that their institutions accept advanced placement. These make up 46 per cent of those which accept advanced placement and 30 per cent of those accepting advanced standing.

The differences in attitudes that apparently prevail, according to indications in data returned through the AUEC-NUEA survey, in each organization, are suggested in Table I on page 8.

One explanation of the different attitudes seemingly apparent in the AUEC and NUEA institutions is that the AUEC colleges and universities are frequently located in metropolitan areas where the dynamics of education may reflect the other aspects of big-city activities. Thus, the AUEC colleges and universities tend to represent more widely the institutions having liberal accrediting policies.

It is possible to discern among institutions having dual membership in AUEC and NUEA considerably more unanimity of opinion (and presumably of policy and practice) than among those institutions having membership only in AUEC or only in NUEA. This attitude may be thrown into relief by calculating the percentages of advanced placement and advanced study within each association group. On this basis, AUEC ranks high in accepting advanced placement but falls lowest in permitting advanced standing. The NUEA institutions maintain a relatively stable attitude toward both advanced placement and advanced standing within their own group. However, when it comes to dual membership institutions the highest percentages of acceptances of each policy are to be found. These calculations are to be seen in Table II on page 8.

TABLE I
POLICIES TOWARDS ADVANCED PLACEMENT AND/OR
ADVANCED STANDING

Association	Reports of Members Returned	Accept Advanced Placement		Accept Advanced Standing	
	Number	Number	Per Cent of Total Survey Responses (N=131)	Number	Per Cent of Total Survey Responses (N=131)
AUEC [*]	75	60	46	39	30
NUEA [†]	34	24	19	20	16
AUEC-NUEA [‡]	22	20	16	16	12
Totals	131	104	79	75	57

^{*}This association in 1957 had 96 institutional members at time survey was started; however, one became inactive during the survey.

[†]This association in 1957 had 47 institutional members, apart from interested individuals and agencies.

[‡]Twenty-seven colleges and universities were members of both AUEC and NUEA in 1957.

TABLE II
POLICIES WITHIN ASSOCIATION GROUPS IN CONNECTION
WITH ACCEPTANCE OF ADVANCED PLACEMENT
AND ADVANCED STANDING

Group	Reports Returned	Accept Advanced Placement		Accept Advanced Standing	
	Number	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
AUEC membership	75	60	80	39	52
NUEA membership	34	24	70	20	59
Dual membership	22	20	91	16	73
National totals	131	104	79	75	57

The suggestion previously made, that AUEC percentage totals as indicated in Table I are high possibly because AUEC membership reflects urban locations and interests, may probably be repeated in reference to the dual membership percentages in Table II. The institutions possessing dual membership are among the larger colleges and universities and located in the larger centers of population. Thus, their situations may induce them to be more dynamic in regard to accreditation than the other groups.

However, no institution revealed by the sampling permits a non-registered student to take an examination in an effort to obtain advanced standing. If the student is registered, he may take an examination—usually after he has demonstrated, either by documentary proof of previous application or studies or through an interview, that he probably is qualified to pass an examination. Thus, there is no institutional parallel in the United States to the University of London's examination scheme for external students.

Evaluation of Proficiency

The several kinds of evaluations used to determine proficiency and thus qualifications for either advanced placement or advanced standing have been categorized into four types for the purposes of analyzing data.

PLACEMENT AND QUALIFYING TESTS—including the CEEB advanced placement program examinations in twelve subjects; other evaluations by CEEB, especially the well-known "college boards"; the traditional placements, including the long-used and pioneer aptitude tests in the Iowa Placement Examinations series; qualifying examinations of various kinds, including local departmental tests; any kind of "exemption" examination; and the Graduate Record Examination aptitude test.

ACHIEVEMENT TESTS—which include the GED batteries and other tests to determine general educational development such as the Iowa Tests of Educational Development and the GRE area tests and advanced tests; the several batteries of ETS cooperative tests, particularly the cooperative general culture tests; and perhaps other suitable tests in the numerous achievement batteries.

DEPARTMENTAL EXAMINATIONS— including locally constructed tests designed to reflect the subject-matter content of the particular instructor's and school's course; and USAFT's end-of-course examinations.

ORAL TESTS AND INTERVIEWS—generally involving counseling on the basis of scholastic records and other evidence of abilities; interviews also may follow submission of proof of service-school training and experiences, or evidence of satisfactory completion of correspondence courses.

Table III suggests that by far the largest number and percentage—76 and 67 per cent—of the institutions specifying the kind of test or method used to determine qualifications for advanced placement or advanced

TABLE III
ADVANCED PLACEMENT OR ADVANCED STANDING
TEST CATEGORIES

Test or Method	Times Used	Percentage of Use Reports
	Number	Per Cent
Placement and qualifying	38	32 (of 116)
Achievement and development	17	14
Departmental course	76	67
Orals and interviews	27	23
Totals	154*	-
	115†	88 (of 116)

* Tests reported used in this number of cases; more than one test used in a college or university.

† Unduplicated number of institutions specifying kind of test or method.

standing reported that departmental and other course examinations are employed. The second highest number of schools referred to placement and other qualifying tests, including traditional placement tests. The third largest number specified was that of orals and interviews. Achievement and other general education development tests, including the college-level GED batteries, were reported as the least-used category. In view of the previously cited widespread acceptance of the college-level GED tests, the data reported by the AUEC-NUEA survey are unexpected. There is not at present, however, any immediately apparent way to reconcile these two divergent reports. The percentage of acceptance of the category in which the college-level GED tests would be reported—that is, in the "achieve-

ment and development" method—reflects in the AUEC-NUEA survey, as indicated in Table III, use by only 14 per cent of the colleges and universities in the sample.

Assistance in Qualifying for Advanced Status

In addition to the question regarding tests and other methods of evaluating qualifications for advanced placement or advanced standing, colleges and universities were asked to report, specifically, what is being done to "fill in or help prepare students to achieve advanced placement and/or advanced standing" by means of such methods as oral tests, interviews, tutorials, seminars, refresher courses, and directed study.

Data returned suggest that there is little provision in American colleges and universities for encouraging and helping students to qualify for either advanced placement or advanced standing. Although there were few specific suggestions to this effect either in the returned AUEC-NUEA questionnaires or among the administrative officers and faculty interviewed during the preliminary survey, the information available indicates that any preparation and qualification for advanced placement and/or advanced standing is largely up to the individual applicant.

That colleges and universities apparently feel little obligation towards a student who desires to take advantage of any existing policies and practices that would permit advanced placement and/or standing is illustrated by the few institutions reporting the existence for this purpose of tutorials, seminars, refresher courses, or directed study. All of these activities would require the establishment of provisions to help ambitious students. But, according to the AUEC-NUEA sample, it is indicated that only 6 per cent of the American colleges and universities now have provisions for directed study to assist students to gain advanced status; 3 per cent provide for tutorials, 2 per cent for seminars, and only .7 per cent for refresher courses. Indeed, the percentage of institutions reporting provision of some kind of method to assist students in qualifying is only 23 per cent of the total sample. The method that is most used—in 17 per cent of the institutions reporting in the survey—is that of orals and interviews. It must be presumed that this involves the presentation of some type of satisfactory demonstration of qualification, and perhaps even of documentary evidence to support a claim of achievement. It is also assumed, on the basis of certain indi-

cations in the questionnaires, that this method may be used in cases where USAFI attestations in behalf of credit are involved.

Table IV represents a compilation of data relating to the national picture in connection with institutional provisions for assistance to students ambitious to attain advanced status.

TABLE IV
ASSISTANCE TO STUDENTS IN QUALIFYING FOR ADVANCED
PLACEMENT AND/OR ADVANCED STANDING

Method	Used by:	Percentage of Survey Reports
	Number	Per Cent
Orals and interviews	22	17
Tutorials	4	3
Seminars	3	2
Refresher courses	1	.7
Directed study	8	6
Totals	27*	23

*Unduplicated number of institutions reporting use of one or more methods.

Comparative National Acceptances of Different Subjects

It was noted in the introduction that one of the goals of the AUEC-NUEA survey was to accumulate data that would indicate whether advanced placement and advanced standing procedures now more largely affect "technical" or "liberal" subjects and courses. The first category was identified there and in the survey as comprising business and commerce courses and other work outside the liberal arts tradition of subject matter. The "liberal" subjects were identified as those courses derived largely from the disciplines of the arts and sciences.

The data as reported show that liberal courses are considerably more widely accepted. According to the sample survey, procedures are in effect in 67 institutions to accept qualifications for advanced technical subject placement; and in 49 institutions to permit advanced standing in connection with technical courses. These may be contrasted with 95 and 68 of the in-

stitutions providing for advanced placement and advanced standing, respectively, in connection with liberal subjects.

In percentage terms, the data suggest that advanced placement is provided for technical qualifications in 51 per cent of the colleges and universities responding in the survey, and advanced standing is permitted in relation to technical courses in 37 per cent of the institutions. On the other hand, 72 per cent of the institutions report permitting advanced placement in relation to liberal subjects, and 52 per cent provide for advanced standing for such subjects.

The explanation probably lies in the relatively greater ease with which advanced status may be determined in connection with liberal subjects. This is admittedly more difficult for technical subjects. General reading, for example, appears to be more likely to contribute background for liberal subjects than for technical ones. Finally, it appears that language qualifications form one of the large items for which liberal advanced standing and placement are permitted.

The considerably greater percentages and numbers of colleges and universities providing for advanced status in relation to liberal subjects reaffirms, it may be noted, the interest that the Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults has taken in initiating the preliminary survey of institutions and in carrying on this present study.

III

MAJOR ISSUES

In addition to the questionnaire, interviews were undertaken with many individuals interested or involved in problems of testing for advanced placement and advanced standing. As a result of the investigation certain major issues begin to come clear.

First, there appears to be a general misunderstanding regarding the considerable extent to which advanced placement has been accepted. Once this has been recognized, it becomes apparent that the true issues are related to advanced standing. The major ones, which will be considered here, are as follows: (1) the granting of credit; (2) the potential advantage in favor of adult students; (3) the relationship of advanced placement to exceptional students; (4) the kind of instruments which would be appropriate; (5) the preservation of autonomy at individual colleges; (6) the role of residence in the baccalaureate; (7) transferability of credit awarded through advanced placement procedures; (8) the fear of cram courses; (9) the problem of obtaining agreement on a national level.

When major issues relating to advanced placement and advanced standing are raised in a consideration of these problems, there has sometimes appeared to be a quite curious misconception of the realities of the situation among certain faculty members and administrative officials. The misconception seems to derive from the fact that little summarized information has hitherto been available about national policies and practices relating to advanced placement and standing. The result has been noted in the preliminary survey of a number of prototype institutions known to have adopted policies and practices relating to advanced placement and advanced standing: an uncertainty about other schools' policies. The tendency has even been observed, within certain of these institutions, where the approaches to these twin problems are somewhat confused: advanced placement is

frequently identified as a fully local and individual problem of a college or university, approachable only through considerations and testing instruments devised to reflect the particular courses and educational philosophy of each institution. Advanced placement procedures, it has been often suggested, may not be devised on a national basis.

On the other hand, oddly enough in view of the actual situation, advanced standing is frequently identified as a problem that may be approached only on a national or regional basis. One institution, it is often suggested, is not capable of testing widely whether any considerable number of students should be credited with either non-residence study or with independent study. What is needed, in this view, is a standardized, centrally administered, objective battery of examinations that do not necessarily mirror slavishly the course as given in an individual college or university; rather, such a battery would reflect widely agreed upon objectives for a certain course in a specific discipline. It is considered quite possible for colleges occasionally (according to a widely held view) to permit advanced standing on their own, under unusual and perhaps quite rare circumstances, by means of regular departmental examinations. But this is so rarely done—the administrative or faculty member casually queried on the matter insists—that it appears all the more necessary to obtain wide agreement as to how it may be done and as to what testing instrument should be used if the credit so obtained is to have transferability.

Neither the preliminary survey of actual policies and practices, nor the national survey, bears out these quite insistent assumptions.

The facts are that advanced placement procedures on a national basis are almost universally accepted, and that advanced standing procedures are limited largely to local discretion. These conclusions are true despite the wide acceptance of certain accreditations under the General Educational Development tests. The fact remains that local discretion determines ultimate decisions even in this procedure.

In the first place, it may be stressed again that procedures to permit advanced placement—specifically by the GED tests and the advanced placement program of the CEEB, which affects by now well over 120 colleges—are at least theoretically accepted quite widely in this country.

Further, placement tests have long been widely used in many schools.

They are sometimes called "exemption examinations." Advanced placement has frequently been approached by locally devised tests or even on the basis of oral examinations and interviews. But much more frequently the testing instrument is one that has been obtained from one of the schools of education and established on a basis suitable nationally for evaluating the achievement and thus the proper placement in college courses of an entering student. The batteries of the Iowa placement examinations were long and widely used for this purpose throughout the country. That they are no longer considered by certain authorities¹ so adequate for their purpose as newly constructed instruments has nothing to do with their past acceptability by faculties of many institutions. Rather this newer criticism reflects the quite extraordinary development in the construction of testing instruments since the middle twenties when the Iowa placement examinations first were made available. But in the meantime, faculties have become habituated to the need for and the usefulness of placement tests of the pioneer kind. Admissions procedures and "orientation" periods have long made use of placement tests.

As a result of this situation, and as a result of the wide acceptance of the GED testing batteries for placement purposes at least, and finally, because of the high prestige of the advanced placement program and the wide publicity given it in education journals, advanced placement is so widely accepted that to declare there are major controversies involved in its approach would be largely an exaggeration.

Credit Biggest Issue

When it comes to advanced standing the biggest issue is credit—which involves transferability and thus accountability to other institutions. The approach to advanced placement could be limited to the local institution; whereas the approach to advanced standing, with its necessary effect beyond the local scene, theoretically can be viewed as best achieved only by means of agreement between institutions either on a national or regional basis. Because accreditation has been historically approached in this country by means of regional groups, this is frequently accepted as the proper method.

1. Clarence Derrick, and W. C. Kuaraceus, articles on Iowa placement examinations in Oscar Krisen Buros, ed., The Fourth Mental Measurements Yearbook, (Highland Park, N. J.: The Gryphon Press, 1953), p. 166.

In the reports on the Brooklyn college experimental project, the long practice of the college in according exemption from certain prescribed courses—not credit—was described. Although it was recognized that certain students "had gained knowledge, skills, and understanding by self-education," the faculty could easily accept advanced placement but not advanced credit. There was no lessening of the requirement for the regular number of credits and courses. They had to take advanced courses, perhaps in the same subjects. Dr. Stern has noted that the issue may be stated in the form of the question: "What was the difference between exemption and credit?" And he goes on to comment and to question further:

Apparently, mere possession of skills or mere achievement and knowledge and understanding was not the full meaning of academic credit. Did credit imply something that college courses alone, and not life experience, could impart to a student? Or was it possible that, when properly measured, equated, and evaluated, adult experience could be shown to be a proper substitute for courses in the attainment of liberal education?²

It must be mentioned again that the advanced placement program provides for advanced standing as well as advanced placement. That is, the program permits individual colleges to appraise the test result and to credit test scores of a certain achievement with course credit. At Harvard, for example, students are given advanced placement with accreditation where high schools have provided college-level work. This provision of the program has led one educator to suggest that these tests could be used widely to evaluate students' non-classroom study.³ But most observers dismiss the use of these tests for that purpose because they are considered much too difficult for preparation by means of self-study. The examinations are viewed as solely for particularly capable, hard-working high school students who have had the considerable advantage of tutorials by teachers motivated, perhaps, by pride and ambition in behalf of the students. Even the English examination, judging by a study of samples of the questions asked, would probably prove much too specific and difficult for even a long-experienced writer.

2. Bernard H. Stern, Adults Grow in Brooklyn (Chicago: CSLEA, 1951), pp. 3-4.

3. Interviews with Leslie E. Brown, Associate Dean, Cleveland College, Western Reserve University, 6 November 1957 and 16 January 1958.

Advanced Standing and the Adult Student

At the other extreme, some fears are expressed that any advanced standing procedures would unavoidably be arranged for the benefit of only adult students in evening colleges. At any rate, could adults become subjects for an important experiment along this line? One university administrative official has declared any wide identification of adult education with efforts to accredit experience and other elements of advanced standing that get very far from the traditional subject-matter testing of course work would be detrimental to the cause of adult education.⁴ He has suggested that if even five per cent of the evening college students in the country attempted to "capitalize" on their experience in an unorthodox fashion, adult education would be prejudiced. Further, he argues that current educational development tests have not lowered standards in evening colleges,⁵ but that degrees awarded for considerable non-classroom study or experience would weaken standards.

On the other side of the argument in this matter, an official of a large middle-western university argues that it would not only be advantageous for adult education to devise and use tests that are no longer geared slavishly to a measurement of schoolroom success, but that once this was accomplished, the net result would be the creation of a degree especially for adults.⁶

Problem Affects Exceptional Students

In surveying issues in connection with advanced standing procedures, it will be the assumption in this chapter that at the moment the problem of advanced standing is one that affects all exceptional students—not just adults. The basic issue under discussion in this chapter is not whether expanded and perhaps liberalized procedures for determining advanced standing would be useful primarily for adults in evening colleges or for gifted youths in day colleges. That is an issue, it appears, that could be examined only in the light of considerable data experience.

4. Interview with Benjamin Bloom, University Examiner, University of Chicago, 28 January 1958.

5. See the American Council on Education's "Proposal for a Study on Value of the High School Level Tests of General Educational Development as a Basis of Admission to College," 14 January 1957 (dittoed, in the files of the Council).

6. Interview with Allen Pfleger, Assistant Dean, Cleveland College, Western Reserve University, 16 January 1958.

This is not to suggest that a high level of maturity, in intelligence and temperament rather than merely in years, is not a crucial factor. In the first place, it seems to most observers that there must be considerable ability for independent study. The applicant for advanced standing, if he intends to obtain credit for his reading, his experience, his work and non-academic training, is identified as one who can generalize from these sources and utilize the data with which he had met to string along the skeleton of the generalization in the same way that a college course is likely to do.

All of this suggests that such an applicant for advanced standing is quite an exceptional student. It should relieve those who fear the degradation of the American college degree that less than two thousand participants in the Advanced Placement Program qualify for either advanced placement or advanced standing by means of the battery of tests provided through that program. Only one student presented himself to take, and to pass successfully, examinations for a degree without having spent time in the classroom. This student apparently is the only one who could qualify under the independent study program at the University of Chicago.⁷

Appropriate Evaluation Instruments

A fourth issue, and the one most concerning educators who were interviewed during the preliminary survey of programs, is that of testing as the basis for accreditation. Applicants for admissions and credit with advanced standing come from a variety of academic and personal backgrounds. There is no way to make each course in each college indistinguishably identical—academically or otherwise. Indeed, it may be doubted that this would be the intention of many educators. But there does seem to be the feeling among educators with whom the problem has been discussed that there should be some kind of basic essentials, first, of achievement in liberal education that should be considered the prerequisite of admission to the upper level of college, and, second, of those attainments in knowledge and understanding that a baccalaureate may be widely accepted as representing.

Thus it is that the issue of appropriate instruments, to evaluate either

7. George E. Barton, "Digest of Minutes," University of Oklahoma faculty seminar, 1-3 November 1957, p. 20. This is held a possible but unlikely situation at the University of Chicago.

admissions achievement or the baccalaureate attainment, represent the most troublesome and uncertain issue in an effort to work out procedures for advanced standing. Part of the issue is the question: should examinations depart from the traditional measurement of subject-matter knowledge; or is it possible to determine what should be known and understood of the generalizations rather than the details?

In the three widely used national (as opposed to local) batteries of testing of advanced standing, two—the General Educational Development tests and the Graduate Record area tests—make use of the generalization and understanding approach. The third—the Advanced Placement Program tests of the CEEB—holds quite rigidly to the traditional subject-matter tests of extremely high level.

The major point involved in the issue of appropriate evaluation instruments is whether or not such a series of testing can be constructed—both for junior-year admission and for a measure of attainment for the baccalaureate (regardless of any intention to grant a baccalaureate to students not in residence for non-classroom or other independent studies). The answer from the experts seems to be that such a battery is obtainable if it is considered desirable.⁸ It is not even inconceivable that an area-examination approach, rather than the course and subject-matter approach, could be constructed to test the level of achievement considered essential for an "external baccalaureate." For well over a century subject-matter examinations have been used by the University of London for this purpose with the result that standards of universities throughout the Commonwealth—including Oxford and Cambridge—have been raised.

It is interesting to speculate on the use of an area-examination in helping to raise the standard of intellectual attainments for a bachelor in liberal arts. Admittedly, agreement on what constitutes an intellectually civilized man, on what he should know about the humanities, the sciences, the social sciences, about the basic ideas of our society and civilization, would be most difficult to obtain.⁹ That much can be achieved along this line, however, is suggested in the experience at Brooklyn College.

The committee on evaluation, framing suitable questions to put to the first candidate for the baccalaureate qualifying under the experimental

8. Interview with Bloom cited above.

9. Interview with William H. Conley, Educational Assistant to President, Marquette University, Milwaukee, 23 April 1958.

project, projected faculty objectives for the degree:

These seem to fall into two categories: (1) Ways or Habits of Thinking and (2) Products of Thinking. We were to look for breadth and scope of thought. Did he show an understanding of himself? How much was he a prisoner of his own culture? How secure was he in the insecurity of his own environment? We were looking for: (a) methodology (critical thinking), (b) values or beliefs (non-material), (c) otherliness (readiness to understand and work for others), and (d) understanding of life (purpose and goal).¹⁰

Significantly, after the candidate had been finally examined, following his work at Brooklyn in tutorials, seminars, and regular classes, and had persuaded the committee that he was "a liberally educated adult," the faculty were "less convinced of the extent to which his liberal education was a product of our project rather than of life experience."¹¹

Autonomy of the Individual School

But many question whether the faculties of several colleges, even those within one discipline, can possibly agree on what constitutes the essential content of the courses they teach—let alone what would be the desirable ends of the education they hope to have achieved by the time the students come up for their degrees.¹² This has been done, however, in the case of the twelve subjects of the Advanced Placement Program tests. For over 400 "prestige" colleges have agreed on content and coverage. Sixty per cent of the institutions accredit qualified students—that is those passing the examinations with scores above the median.¹³

But the essential point here seems to be that it is up to the individual college to decide, first, whether or not to accept the APP, and, second, at what point in the score curves the evaluation should be accepted for the purposes of advanced placement and at what point the work of the student should be accredited. Autonomy is preserved in this case. Some question whether it could be equally maintained when comprehensive, general examinations are constructed and administered. At present

10. Stern, Adults Grow . . . (previously cited) p. 48.

11. Ibid., pp. 47-48.

12. Interview with Pflieger, loc. cit.

13. David Dudley, former Director of the Advanced Placement Program of the College Entrance Examination Board, as cited in "Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee on Instruction," School of General Studies, Columbia University, New York, 20 December 1957.

such comprehensive examinations as are used in connection with candidacy for a baccalaureate are largely devised on a basis that reflects the course content, and the instructors' penchants, of the local school. On the other hand, the Graduate Record Examinations are used now to qualify students in a few schools for graduation.

While no educator could claim that a course in a certain small-town junior college could equal the identical course given in an old and noted New England college, by means of text-books and readings available widely strong efforts are made to have the one course come as closely as possible to the essentials of the other. But the decision on what and how to teach ultimately reposes with the individual instructor. Perhaps the final test of autonomy and the fundamental standard are more directly concerned with the instructor than with the institution in which he teaches. For example, instructors move from college to college, but the course content reflects the individual.

Minimum Residence Requirements

To many individuals and to the education officers of the U. S. Department of Defense, it appears that the present usual residence requirement of thirty semester-hours during one, and a final, year represents a major issue. That it has raised a barrier to qualification for the baccalaureate in the cases of numerous servicemen who have been unable to remain for any length of time in one institution is proved by Defense Department records and by case-histories. The immediate issue is made all the graver because overseas branches and "contract" schools, particularly in peripheral areas, are reported to be retracting the facilities widely available immediately after World War II and during the Korean struggle.¹⁴

Discussions during the preliminary survey suggest that it might be possible to liberalize the present requirements for minimum residence. For instance, if the minimum number of required semester hours were to be spread over more than the final year, the situation for many servicemen evidently would be alleviated. The Air Force now permits leave and handles costs for an officer for the final semester of study for a degree, either baccalaureate or master's. This might present another approach

14. Interview with Col. Miles R. Palmer, USAF, Staff Director, and with Walker F. Agnew, Assistant Staff Director, Education Division, Office of Armed Forces Information and Education, Department of Defense, Washington, D. C., 29 January 1958.

to liberalizing residence requirements, that is, one semester of resident work as the requirement for a degree. Conceivably, demonstration of academic accomplishments by means of comprehensives might be enough to satisfy any faculty that its judgment on a candidate for a degree would be sound even though only perhaps fifteen to sixteen hours had been taken in residence in the final year.

Still another approach might be considered. This would be based on the acceptance by at least a number of colleges of an instrument to evaluate attainment of broad goals considered necessary for a bachelor of arts. Once these broad goals were determined by agreement of faculties, evaluation by means of contemporary testing methods could be established. If a candidate for the baccalaureate could demonstrate his attainments by means of both written tests and the kind of orals that the Board of Examiners for the United States Foreign Service long has used, it would seem that he could be considered to have earned the right to liberalized residence requirements.

Transferability of Credit

Credit transferability between schools accredited and in good standing with the several accrediting associations has been worked out over the past half-century to the point where most credit pertaining to a specific curriculum may be accepted to permit transferred advanced standing. But there still remains a major issue involved in any approach to advanced standing that would entail granting credit that may not be tested, confirmed, and attested by traditional subject-matter examinations over orthodox courses. The Advanced Placement Program avoids both of these difficulties: The tests it uses are quite traditional subject-matter examinations over orthodox, even though not usual, college-level courses. This explains the easy and increasing acceptance of this program and the probable favor of registrars and admissions officers when questions of transferability of credit are raised.

But there have been questions raised when simulated credit, even though confirmed by careful evaluations of several kinds, is submitted for transfer. This was the case in two instances of application by Brooklyn College graduates for admission to graduate schools. However, once the situation had been explained and the grounds for granting the quasi-simulated credit (based on credit for experience confirmed by tutorials,

assigned reading, directed study and subject-matter tests) the admitting institutions both accepted the credits and students.

To Louis M. Hacker of Columbia University, transferability of credit is crucial to the whole problem of advanced standing. It is the chief motivation, apparently, of his proposal to give over the responsibility for "external" degree examinations—of a University-of-London type—to a group of American urban universities. By means of his plan, he claims that "standards would be supported and degrees made meaningful." Moreover, an individual institution's worries over accreditation would be assumed by an agency that could take a view made the more objective because it would represent the judgment on credit transferable to a number of colleges. (See p. 30 for further discussion of this proposal.)

Cram Courses as Result?

Objections to centralized examinations of the University-of-London type have been voiced on the grounds that all too soon some enterprising publisher would make available copies of the examinations, or close facsimiles of them. The fears have been expressed, too, that cram books and cram courses would quickly be prepared.¹⁵

To these objections the point has been made that instruction at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, as well as the University of London, represents, really, coaching for the final examinations, which are the sole grounds for awarding a degree. The same situation is true of French university instruction, examinations and degrees. The "manuals" for a course there usually represent the essentials that must be known if the examination is to be prepared for adequately. There are the further examples of qualifying examinations in the United States for practicing medicine, surgery, law, accountancy, and other professions. In each of these cases there is strong evidence that the education has been geared to preparing the student to pass the examination that will permit him to practice the profession involved.

That such a situation can have disastrous results is to be seen in the claimed effect of the New York "Regents" on high school education in

15. James B. Whipple, "Copernican Revolution," unpublished memorandum to staff of CSLEA, 9 November 1957, p. 3 (in files of Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults).

that state.¹⁶ Further, if a teacher is burdened with the responsibility to "get" his students through an examination, the ideal of an autonomous teacher is seriously limited.

How Get Agreement?

Because considerable agreement among colleges and universities has been demonstrated in the case of acceptance of the results of the General Education Development batteries, the qualifying examinations for the professions, the Advanced Placement Program, and the Graduate Record Examinations (to say nothing of the wide use of tests devised for placement, achievement, aptitude, and other purposes by schools of education), hope of agreement for further centralized measuring devices is certainly possible. The issue, however, is how to get agreement, rather than whether agreement is possible.

The answer to this, as put by more than one educator interested in the problem, is to call a conference of representatives of "pace-setting" institutions and interested schools and agencies to explore and discuss the issues of advanced standing. Professor Hacker has suggested such a conference could project what could be the next step towards obtaining wide agreement on any proposal. Perhaps, he has stated, it would be possible to obtain foundation financing of an exploration of issues involved in various approaches. He has noted that representatives from Columbia University, the Educational Testing Service, Yale, Harvard, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the Universities of Iowa and Texas, Carnegie Corporation, certain oil companies, International Business Machines Corporation, and Fortune magazine have already indicated interest to him in such an exploration and conference.

Support for the idea of a national conference has been reported from the Department of Defense education officers, the American Council on Education, the Air Force Education Division, and numerous educational institutions besides those mentioned by Professor Hacker.

The major issues for such a conference have been only indicated in this present study. The approach to and the choice of instruments of evaluation appears, in the final analysis, to represent the most delicate and difficult problem to be considered by a national conference on the subject

16. Ibid., p. 4.

of advanced placement and advanced standing.

Finally, it should be pointed out that the major issues already identified do not converge on all levels of higher education. They may be characterized as affecting three academic levels of the problems of advanced placement and advanced standing in different ways at various points in the academic curriculum. This means that the problems may be viewed in connection with the lower-college level as having certain urgencies and immediacies; similarly on the upper-college level. Finally, on the ultimate degree-giving level—as in cases of "college without classes" or of the "external baccalaureate"—certain new problems are apparent, whereas other problems already common to the upper and lower-college levels are no longer pertinent.

IV

PROGRAMS OF ADVANCED STANDING FOR ADULTS

Noting that mature students, frequently registered in evening colleges of urban universities in this country, are many times compelled to "'learn' much that they already know," the Brooklyn College experimental project was originated with the objective of trying to make the educational experience of such students "more fruitful and effective." The kind of liberal education these students had been undergoing was declared to be wasteful.¹ The easily equated experience-background of many students—who were artists, writers, social workers, teachers, lawyers, dentists, rabbis, and nurses, among other vocations—included quite systematic reading over many years. They had read "from Montaigne to Mumford, from Jane Austen to Kafka"; several spoke more than one foreign language; a number had traveled widely; others had specialized interests they had developed; two were writing novels, and another a technical book. Practically all had been unable to obtain a baccalaureate because of financial situations and family responsibilities:

For years, many of them cherished the hope of a college education but were dismayed by the thought of rigid and time-consuming curriculum requirements which might necessitate tedious repetition of material already familiar to them or attendance in classes with their juniors in years and outlook. Getting a baccalaureate degree now means the completion of important unfinished business. This experimental project is offered them in order to discover whether the attainment of the degree can be accelerated by a program which respects and utilizes their adult experiences and achievements.²

That this argument has necessarily been considerably qualified, insofar as the administrators of the experimental project at Brooklyn are concerned, should in no wise mitigate its usefulness as the expression and defense of a particular point of view. Other spokesmen and observers are inclined to continue to support this estimate.

1. Bernard H. Stern, How Much Does Adult Experience Count? (Chicago: CSLEA, 1955), p. 3.

2. Ibid., p. 5.

The strongest defense of any program permitting advanced standing by various means is that it should permit certain students, qualified by reason of their maturity, experiences, and wide and thoughtful reading, to accelerate their program for a baccalaureate in more efficient and economic fashion.

However, to the Defense Department, especially the Air Force educators, the useful aspect of a centralized and liberalized program for advanced standing is that it would permit many officers and men who have already spent a great deal of time in classes under varying circumstances to regularize their already-earned credits and achieve finally the baccalaureate for which they had long been working.

Still another aspect of needs stemming from economic utilization of manpower and brainpower is reported from Donald B. DuBois. His studies have indicated that "The percentage of degree holding officers are double and triple the rates of non-graduates."³ Thus retention of needed officers is a factor and might be increased under the program of "true educational level" proposed by DuBois. It would result in accreditation of knowledge, "no matter how come by," which could mean job advancement within the Air Force of many qualified officers.⁴

Much of the evidence advanced by the proposal for the Brooklyn College experimental degree project stressed adult needs for a non-traditional approach to advanced placement and advanced standing. The results of the experimental project at Brooklyn College confirm the adequacy of the scientific approach in the particular circumstances and with the individuals concerned rather than prove that questions of advanced placement and advanced standing have been settled once and for all.

There is considerable opposition to colleges and universities espousing a program of advanced standing primarily for the benefit of adults.

On the other hand, a few evening colleges have been leaders and pace-setting institutions in connection with educational experiments. They include such institutions as the University of Chicago, University of California, Washington University, New York University, University of Okla-

3. Bruce Callander, "'College Credit' Plan Test Slated for AU," Air Force Times, 10 August 1957, p. 35. (This is based on data from DuBois).

4. Ibid.

homa, Western Reserve University. These are a few of the urban universities apparently willing to consider and initiate experimental programs that involve academic credit.

The attitude of many faculties toward experimentation in the evening college is influenced by their belief that evening colleges not only suffer from "soft pedagogy"⁵ but also from both inferior standards and students. These attitudes represent a source of insecurity for evening-college deans and their staffs. There is a feeling among university faculties that toying with credit in the evening college will reflect negatively on the "regular" college standards and reputation of the institution.

However, such a situation offers an unusual opportunity for the evening college to experiment. Some educational experiments carried on in evening colleges and in university extension systems have proved in many institutions to be of merit, have stimulated new university credit courses and programs acceptable to the residence divisions, and have demonstrated to communities and trustees that a university can be a viable, dynamic institution today rather than a static, backward-looking agency inhibited within a framework limited by a concept and practice frozen by the end of the seventeenth century in an alien land and culture.

Further, the evening college most frequently comes into contact with both the student irregularly qualified from the rigidly academic point-of-view, and the strongly motivated applicant eager to win a degree. By means of an advanced standing system, it has been urged that many "could make greater contributions to the welfare of their country through the employment of their abilities to the maximum extent."⁶ Finally, it has seemed to one observer that there is an urgent need to identify, develop and better use the brainpower potential of Americans.

5. Roger DeCrow, Ability and Achievement of Evening College and Extension Students (Chicago: CSLEA, 1959), p. 3.

6. American Council on Education, "Proposal for a Study on the Value . . ." (previously cited), p. 1.

APPROACHES TO ADVANCED STANDING AND ADVANCED PLACEMENT

There have been a number of proposals dealing with programs of advanced standing and advanced placement. Of these, four deserve particular attention. The first is a proposal by Louis M. Hacker, of Columbia University; the second is a highly individualized and personalized approach of Northeastern University; the third is advanced standing by departmental examination; and the fourth is the well-known Brooklyn College experiment.

Hacker's Proposal

Primary elements of Hacker's proposal are outlined as follows:

1. The goal would be to "regularize and wholly accredit the work of older part-time students and that of those in the two-year schools on the academic and pre-professional sides."
2. This could be best achieved by means of a universal examination for external, non-resident students given under the aegis of a regional group of urban universities.
3. Older students would be released from minimum credit hours, residence requirements, and formal curricula. Classes would be primarily for "coaching" purposes, which would include correspondence and TV courses.
4. Although local controls over admissions and instruction would be maintained, "at the same time . . . standards would be supported and degrees made meaningful."¹

Hacker takes as his quite obvious prototype London University, which became an examining body a century ago. He argues that if a group of urban American universities should take on this examination function in behalf of "external" students, it should be able to accomplish the first of the above goals. Hacker has suggested the similarity of such a program to the usual state certification for professional practice. He also notes the fact that in a number of states no formal class-room studies at a law school are re-

1. Louis M. Hacker, "New Kinds of Students and New Ways of Testing Achievement," School and Society, Vol. 85, No. 2116, September 28, 1957, p. 263.

quired as prerequisite to stand for an examination for the bar. The university law-school student and the "reader" in a law-office are at least technically on identical bases as they face the examiners.

Northeastern's Approach

Yet an even more highly personalized and individualized approach is the one followed at Northeastern University in Boston. The program of advanced placement and advanced standing is characterized by two considerable differences from most others mentioned up to this time:

1. Curriculum is largely technical and vocational in the school of commerce, which uses the program.
2. The program is not publicized, except within the faculty and administrative staff, so as to avoid any danger that the college "might be besieged" by applicants desiring advanced standing, particularly.²

The administration looks upon advanced placement as largely a method of avoiding boredom for students quite adequately prepared from long experience in certain areas. Some students, it is held, must take a professional approach towards their professional degree because they "possess more than the average in terms of vocational experience."³ If an adult with rather high-level vocational, or professional, experience, who wants to obtain his baccalaureate, should be required to "earn" all the 128 credit units required for this degree, amassing them credit-by-credit, it is believed that the applicant would be seriously discouraged. Further, what the administrators at Northeastern view as the "whole man concept," an effort to stress certain of the liberal arts in what has been largely a vocational curriculum, would not be possible for the very men who could immediately profit from this approach both in their professions and in their personal and community activities.

Northeastern uses no formal testing to select and to place candidates previously recommended by faculty members for this special degree program. An assistant dean spends one to four hours discussing the individual applicant's background, experience, current responsibilities, and educational goals and interests. If non-classroom experience seems to have quali-

2. Interview with Gurth Abercrombie, Associate Dean, School of Business, Northeastern University, Boston, 6-7 February 1959. (Reorganizations underway at this institution may have modified this program since the time of the study.)

3. Idem.

fied the individual for advanced placement or advanced standing, the instructor of the course or courses involved will next examine the applicant. On most occasions, because Northeastern, like Brooklyn College, has found that to equate experience fully with an academic course requires an effort to formalize generalizations, the applicant will be directed in additional readings, with an instructor assigned as tutor. The tutorial experience is designed to give the student a "deeper draft" than his vocational experience has given him.

At one time there were nine special students in the program; in 1958 there were seven. But even with these few students involved, the difficulties of tutorials—time and costs—loom large.

After satisfactorily completing independent studies and tutorials, the applicant must pass a regular departmental examination. Only in this way is it believed that professional experience can "be evaluated both qualitatively and quantitatively."⁴ The dean believes that to satisfy credit requirements, the instructor must put approval on the adequacy of preparation; the college in this way may vouch for the qualifications of the candidate when it awards the degree.⁵

Departmental Examinations

The Northeastern approach is an interesting variation on what may be the oldest procedure of all, the granting of advanced standing by some form of departmental examination. In many institutions students may petition for advanced standing in a particular subject matter. In such cases, each department sets up its own procedures for examining and passing upon the student's qualifications. In some cases a student must be in residence to qualify, but in at least one instance the system was established specifically in the adult education division of the university.

Brooklyn's Experimental Degree Project

In the course of its experimental degree project, beginning formally in 1954, Brooklyn College has had perhaps as much intensive concern with the problems of advanced standing as any institution in the country. The project was designed to permit qualification for a baccalaureate partly on the

4. Idem.

5. Interview with Albert E. Everett, Dean, School of Business, Northeastern University, Boston, 6-7 February 1958.

basis of background and experience, as opposed to the traditional academic course-and-credit fashion of amassing bases for a degree. Candidates for this degree were screened by means of the American Council on Education's psychological examination (as a way to indicate level of scholastic aptitude). After an evaluation designed to reflect the contribution, somewhat in relation to college credits, of the candidate's background and experience, he was asked finally to take the Graduate Record Examination area test.⁶

The results of the first year's tests are shown in Table V. These

TABLE V
COMPARATIVE RESULTS OF GRADUATE RECORD
EXAMINATION AREA TESTS IN THREE
BROAD DIVISION OF DISCIPLINES

Group Categories	Test Battery		
	Social Science	Humanities	Natural Science
Mean scaled scores for Brooklyn project students.	479	508	425
Mean scaled scores for upper sophomores based on 2,000 sophomores' scores in seven colleges and universities.	430	458	455
Mean scaled scores for upper seniors based on 3,000 seniors' scores in 21 colleges and universities.	489	494	487

* Table reproduced from Bernard H. Stern How Much Does Adult Experience Count? (Chicago: CSLEA, 1955), p. 13.

figures are compared with scores for upper sophomores and upper seniors. It will be noted that the candidates for the Brooklyn experimental project in this table are shown as ranking highest in the humanities section of the area tests, second in social science, and third in natural science. In computing the percentage of candidates in the Brooklyn College experimental project who exceed the average scores made by upper seniors in the standardization group for the GRE humanities area test, it is indicated that 63 per cent of the Brooklyn candidates exceeded the average score in this test; 46 per cent the social science average, and 20 per cent the natural science

6. Stern, How Much Does . . . ? (previously cited), pp. 3, 11-12.

average score. Perhaps the legitimate comparison should be made in relation to the upper sophomore scores. As Table V shows, the Brooklyn candidates exceed the mean scaled scores for upper sophomores in both the social science and humanities tests. The mean scaled score for the Brooklyn students in the natural science test was somewhat under the mean scaled score for upper sophomores.

The assumption of the Brooklyn College experimental project as it started out was that there are adults, "who by virtue of their occupational or personal experiences, have in essence already met some of our course requirements for the degree. . . ." It was anticipated that a student would be able to "receive immediate partial credit toward the degree" on the basis of his "skills and experiences."⁷

At first it was thought possible to accredit a candidate on the basis of his scores in the GRE area tests. But it was quickly discovered that "the area examination did not correspond closely enough with the curricula." The physics department of Brooklyn, for example, was not willing to accept the area tests as the equivalent of Physics 1, 2 and 3. The GRE area tests, then, were used at Brooklyn College "for selection, for ascertaining the breadth of reading and comprehension in reading; not for accreditation. Our experience was that the area tests could show whether there is a high level of verbal sophistication; they cannot be used for substantive content, in our opinion. We could not get faculty acceptance that these tests represent the complete curricular data within those areas and courses."⁸

In Bernard Stern's report on the Brooklyn project at the end of its first year of operation, he related the cases of ten different students participating in the special experimental project. All of these cases illustrated something of the extraordinary background brought to the project by the students accepted for matriculation. But in reference to the GRE area test scores of applicants for the experimental degree, the case of a later applicant is significant.

This student was a free-lance artist, just past thirty-five at the time of application to Brooklyn College, almost completely self-educated, with

7. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

8. Interview with Evelyn Raskin, Department of Psychology, Brooklyn College, 5 February 1958.

only a couple of art courses taken under formal instruction. The results of her GRE area tests showed that her rank was extraordinarily high in comparison with the scores of majors in the standardization groups in each of the three areas, social science, humanities, and natural science.⁹ Thus, it is obvious that this case raised to the most intense degree a dilemma of advanced placement. That is, despite the Brooklyn experimental premise that life experience had given this individual the equivalent of advanced college study, should she still be required to take certain elementary courses in order to add to range and depth of knowledge?

Most of the students participating in the Brooklyn project are reported to have been required to take certain regular courses, tutorials, directed-reading, and seminars in order to validate their grasp of the several areas and particularly of the more basic elements of the several disciplines involved in these areas. After such work, essay-type examinations, for the most part, were employed for final course-achievement evaluation.

Even in the case of the artist, Stern had to conclude that there was still insufficient data gathered through the experimental degree project to justify accreditation solely on the basis of the Graduate Record Examination area tests. That this battery of the GRE testing program has been most useful in connection with admissions, with validation of major work for candidates for the baccalaureate, is clear. It is also evident from the Brooklyn College experimental project that something more than the GRE area tests—in the opinion of the administration at Brooklyn—must be used to validate experience and self-study. By means of the several methods of helping to fill in the evident deficiencies of students, it is nevertheless possible to permit independent study and experience to be accredited in terms of transferable credit.

In Conclusion

The widely used instruments to evaluate general educational development, with their emphases upon the lasting and permanent results of education rather than memory-retention, do offer administrators and faculty today greater opportunities than ever before to appraise their own institutions and departments. Students desirous of accelerating their qualifi-

9. See Stern, Adults Grow . . . (previously cited), pp. 14-15 for more complete report.

cation for the baccalaureate probably can be soon, if not already, quite adequately tested in relation to their achievement of the kind of first step on the road to education that is really meant by the bestowal of the baccalaureate. There seems to be wide agreement already that instruments that can properly and adequately appraise a student's readiness to enter into the higher college level exist and are being used. Whether such instruments should be nationally accepted as the sole measure of entrance is quite another matter.

It appears that the authors of several kinds of evaluations are eager to apply their methods to the ultimate problem of testing both the meaning and the achievement of a college education. It may be doubted that any group of educators, brought together to discuss the problem and the approach, would be able to attain any degree of agreement at this time. Too much in the way of data and experimental experience is still needed before such agreement could be anticipated.

But it does seem that there are occasions and opportunities for several quite interesting and useful experiments that will contribute towards an understanding of what is involved. The Brooklyn College experimental degree project has been most useful. Perhaps many of the favorite theses held before the experiment had been able to provide data and information from experience have had to go by the board. But that is the great advantage of the scientific effort and approach.

What does seem to be most promising at this time would be a continuation of the effort to determine true educational level, as opposed to the present years-of-education yardstick, and to obtain the cooperation of some college or university in accepting groups of students under both determinations. Observation of such groups might give some of the answers that administrators and faculty members still need in order to project policies and procedures in connection with granting advanced status that will be genuinely useful.

From the AUEC-NUEA survey, it is clear that the problems of advanced status do concern a large proportion of administrators and faculty of institutions of higher education. But it is equally apparent that great uncertainty still prevails in this area. That the continuously mounting enrollment at American colleges and universities creates a favorable climate for trying to accelerate the programs of qualified stu-

dents is perhaps the strongest impression from both the study of certain representative institutions and from the AUEC-NUEA questionnaire responses.

Appendix

QUESTIONNAIRE USED IN STUDY

	<u>TECHNICAL</u>	<u>LIBERAL</u>
1. a. Do you have in your institution (in any department, school, or college) any procedures to give advanced placement? (without credit)	Yes _____ No _____	Yes _____ No _____
	Course Names: _____	Course Names: _____
(Please write on back of this sheet if more space is needed)	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
b. Are there any special provisions that apply specifically to extension or evening college and not to other divisions of the institution? Please explain.	_____	_____
	_____	_____
(Please write on back of this sheet if more space is needed)	_____	_____
	_____	_____
2. a. Do you have in your institution any procedures to permit advanced standing by examination without residence requirements for past study? (with credit)	Yes _____ No _____	Yes _____ No _____
	_____	_____
(Please write on back of this sheet if more space is needed)	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____

	<u>TECHNICAL</u>	<u>LIBERAL</u>
b. Are there any special provisions that apply specifically to extension or evening college and not to other divisions of the institution? Please explain.		
(Please write on back of this sheet if more space is needed)		
3. What tests and other methods of determining proficiency in such cases are used in your institution?		
(Please write on back of this sheet if more space is needed)		
4. What other devices such as oral tests, interviews, tutorials, and seminars are used to fill in or help prepare students to achieve advanced placement and or advanced standing in your institution?		
(Please write on back of this sheet if more space is needed)		

	<u>TECHNICAL</u>	<u>LIBERAL</u>
5. What tests or methods might be needed or preferred to the tests and devices mentioned above in Questions 3 and 4?		
(Please write on back of this sheet if more space is needed)		
6. Even though no department school or college in your institution now makes use of procedures to permit either advanced placement or advanced standing, have any individuals in your administration or faculty expressed an interest in these problems of advanced placement and standing?	Yes _____ No _____	Yes _____ No _____
(Please write on back of this sheet if more space is needed)		
7. If the results of this survey should be addressed to such persons, or to others, please list at right:		
(Please write on back of this sheet if more space is needed)		

8. Do you have any comments, statements, or questions?

TECHNICAL

LIBERAL

(Please write on back of this sheet if more space is needed)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Institution: _____

☐ AUEC (Check appropriate square(s))

By: _____

☐ NUEA

RETURN TO CSLEA

